

More Information:

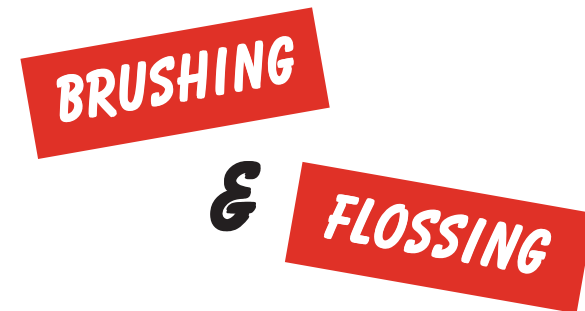
If you want to know more about keeping your teeth healthy, contact the:

Office of Oral Health
Family Health Administration
Maryland Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene
201 West Preston Street, 3rd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-767-5300
www.fha.state.md.us/oralhealth
e-mail: oralhealth@dhmh.state.md.us



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YOUR TEETH



Some tips for good oral health from your
Maryland Department of Health
and Mental Hygiene



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lieutenant Governor
John M. Colmers, Secretary

The Importance of Brushing Your Teeth

Brushing removes plaque and food from your teeth.

Proper brushing reduces the risk of tooth decay and gum disease.

Brushing Tips

Always use a soft-bristled toothbrush.

Replace your toothbrush every 3 months.

Never share toothbrushes, it spreads germs.

Children under 3 years old should not use toothpaste until they are able to spit out the toothpaste.

Children under 7 years of age need an adult's help brushing their teeth. Use half a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.



How to Brush

- Place the toothbrush against the gum line at a 45-degree angle. Use a small circular motion to brush your teeth and gums.
- Brush back and forth on the chewing surfaces of your teeth holding the brush flat.
- Brush the back of your teeth.
- Brush your tongue! This will freshen your breath and remove germs.
- Brush for at least 3 minutes, 2 times a day. Be sure to brush at bedtime to remove bacteria that can cause decay while you are sleeping.

Flossing Tips

Flossing cleans between the teeth where a toothbrush can't reach.

Flossing helps control bad breath.

Children should never floss without an adult's help. A dentist or hygienist can show you how to floss your child's teeth.

How to Floss

- Wrap about 18 inches of floss around the middle fingers. Gently slide the floss between the teeth (don't snap the floss into the gums).
- As the floss reaches the gum line, make a C-shape around the tooth until you feel pressure against your tooth.
- Gently scrape the tooth surface with the floss.
- Move the floss as it becomes soiled and repeat the process for each tooth.

Types of Floss

- Waxed or unwaxed
- Flavored or unflavored
- Wide or regular



All types of floss are acceptable. Pre-threaded flossers are helpful for children learning how to floss or for those that have trouble with arm movement.